

米国加州言語政策227資料

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Newspaper articles on 227

By Hisao Arimura

Abstract

Proposition 227 advocated by Unz was undoubtedly a powerful language policy which was to revolutionize the bilingual education scene in the State of California. This particular proposition triggered subsequent debates in many states in the nation. The nature of the proposition has a great deal to do with the very core of the country, where such wide ranging cultural as well as linguistic entities exist.

The present paper will make an attempt to collect and introduce newspaper articles which addressed this single issue. Since the present author became interested in the proposition, special attention has been focused on how the newspapers have been dealing with this problem. And it was noted over the year(s?) that there have been a great number of cases where previously available newspaper clippings on the Internet have become unavailable. This is the precise reason why the author of this paper is determined to collect and keep as many newspaper clippings on this issue as possible. The author strongly believes that keeping these newspaper clippings can be instrumental for those who may be interested in bilingual education.

Tuesday, September 28, 1999

Ruling on Bilingual Ban Limits Waivers Parents

From Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO -- A state appeals court tightened California's voter-approved ban on bilingual education Monday, ruling that only parents, not entire school districts, can ask for exemptions from the law.

Proposition 227, which passed with 61% support and took effect last year, requires students to be taught "overwhelmingly" in English.

But it allows parents and students to seek waivers that would allow them to remain in bilingual classes and learn some subjects in their native language if their teachers and schools approve. To qualify, the students must be older than 10 or have special needs.

In a lawsuit by the Oakland, Berkeley and Hayward districts, Alameda County Judge Henry

Needham ruled last year that the state board must consider districtwide requests for Proposition 227 waivers.

Then-Gov. Pete Wilson said the decision could “eviscerate” the law.

The 1st District Court of Appeal disagreed with Needham, ruling 3-0 on Monday that the intent of Proposition 227 was “that English instruction will be provided in all cases except those where parental waivers are made.”

A long-standing California law allows the state Board of Education to waive virtually any state-wide educational law at a district’s request. But the appeals court said the proposition could not be reconciled with such waivers.

Laura Schulkind, a lawyer for the districts seeking waivers, said the ruling is “not good for kids. “We . . . question the wisdom of making complex educational policy through an initiative process where the electorate can be misinformed through ballot statements,” she said.

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September 15, 1999

State Teachers Association loses challenge to portion of Proposition 227

The Sacramento Bee

LOS ANGELES (AP) -- The California Teachers Association has lost a federal court lawsuit challenging a provision of Proposition 227, the voter-approved initiative requiring students be taught in English.

U.S. District Judge Edward Rafeedie’s ruling leaves standing the right of parents and guardians to sue a teacher individually, if the teacher “willfully and repeatedly” violates Proposition 227.

Rafeedie’s decision handed down Sept. 8 rejected the CTA contentions that the lawsuit provision is vague, and that constitutional rights to free speech and due process would be violated by such lawsuits.

No teacher has been sued for alleged violation of Proposition 227, approved by 61 percent of California voters in 1998, the judge noted. The CTA filed suit last December against Section 320 of the law, which abolished most bilingual education programs for California’s 1.4 million children who speak little if any English, replacing them with English-only instruction. In some cases, parents can receive a waiver to continue with bilingual classes.

The judge’s ruling said that under the proposition “teachers are required to hold lessons for English learners in English, rather than in the native language.”

In many other situations, teachers would not be prohibited from using “languages other than English in disciplining students, emergency training, social interactions, tutoring, parent-teacher

conferences, or any of the other situations listed by the plaintiffs (CTA)," he said.

The CTA argued that the law on classroom instruction is vague, and said teachers facing lawsuits might lose their jobs if forced to pay damages in a lawsuit.

"We think the judge has misunderstood the law," Tommye Hutto, a spokeswoman for the CTA legal department, said Wednesday. An appeal was likely, she said.

"The teachers can't tell what they're supposed to do and what is prohibited. How much of the speech in a classroom can be in the Spanish language, or the Armenian language or any other language is not spelled out. Nobody knows," she said.

Sharon Browne of the Pacific Legal Foundation, which represented some parents of limited English students interested in having their children taught in English, said the judge's decision "preserves the spirit and intent behind Proposition 227."

"Without an enforcement mechanism in place, Proposition 227 is of little value to parents whose children attend schools in districts that refuse to comply with the law," Browne said.

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August 24, 1999

Report Blasts Former S.F. Schools Chief

Rojas blocked Prop. 227 inquiry, grand jury says

Manny Fernandez, Chronicle Staff Writer

San Francisco Chronicle

The San Francisco civil grand jury issued a scathing report yesterday accusing former schools chief Bill Rojas and his staff of stonewalling its investigation into the school district's bilingual education programs.

The 1998-99 grand jury blasts school officials for being confrontational and dishonest, failing to hand over documents pertaining to the district's bilingual programs and refusing to cooperate with investigators.

The report also charges district administrators with creating an atmosphere of fear and mistrust between teachers and principals on one hand and then-Superintendent Rojas and his staff on the other.

"Our experience with the SFUSD administrators was such that it appeared that they consciously threw roadblocks in the way of the investigators from the grand jury at virtually every step of its investigation," reads the report.

The grand jury's investigation focused on the effect of Proposition 227 on the district's bilingual instruction and finances. The controversial proposition, which passed with 61 percent of the vote

in June, was designed to end bilingual education in California.

The law requires school districts statewide to teach children in English or provide alternative programs, at parents' request, in which students are gradually moved to English-language classes.

Implementation of the proposition has been complicated in San Francisco because of a 1976 federal consent decree, which the district says mandates it to offer a wide range of bilingual programs, including instruction in a student's native language. District officials maintain that they have been making an effort to comply with both by expanding English-language instruction.

Under Proposition 227, schools are required to replace bilingual education with a one year program of intensive English-language instruction. But the grand jury report states that San Francisco teachers told investigators that students are kept in bilingual classes for a longer time period "to ensure that the bilingual dollars flowed" into the district.

Approximately 20,000 of the district's 65,000 students are classified as Limited English Proficient and currently receive part or all of their school instruction in a language other than English, according to the grand jury. The report states that the district receives more than \$30 million a year in state and federal funds for bilingual programs.

School administrators told the grand jury the district is not obligated to spend all that money on bilingual programs. When investigators for the grand jury asked an accountant for the school district how much money was spent by the district on bilingual education, the accountant could not answer.

"It is difficult to understand, given two months' notice, why the auditor could not locate this number," the report states. "Because of our other experiences with district personnel, it would lead one to believe that the district did not want us to know how little of the funds were used for the purposes intended."

Attempts to reach Rojas, who left San Francisco in June to become superintendent in Dallas, were unsuccessful.

District officials said they have yet to fully analyze the findings of the grand jury report and would not comment on specific allegations until they had.

"We really haven't had an opportunity to review it," said Elaine Koury, a spokeswoman for the school district, adding that the release comes at a hectic time for administrators, one day before the city's 115 schools open for the 1999-2000 school year.

Koury did say, however, that the district cooperated fully with the grand jury during its inquiry. "The San Francisco Unified School District complied with the grand jury's request for information, and we have the paper trail to prove it," Koury said. "We provided them with everything that they asked for."

What the grand jury asked for, she said, included questions about school district policies and the content of bilingual programs that went beyond their jurisdiction. "There were questions that various people felt they didn't have the right to ask," Koury said.

School board member Dan Kelly described the report as not an inquiry but a complaint from jury members about their inability to find out any information. "This is not the first irrational report that we've gotten" from a grand jury, Kelly said. "Grand juries aren't always very well informed or efficient."

The grand jury report recommended that the next civil jury continue to study the school district's bilingual education programs, stating that further examination was needed.

The 18-member panel was particularly disturbed by the "paranoia" that it said existed among Rojas, the staff and teachers. "It was very clear that there existed a party line," the report states, "and that the superintendent and his staff wanted the answers to our questions orchestrated according to what they wanted and not necessarily what was happening with the schools."

The report attacks Rojas for failing to respond to the grand jury's questions, and finally appearing before members only after a subpoena was about to be issued.

During sworn testimony before the grand jury, Rojas also promised to provide several documents to the jury members, including legal opinions involving Proposition 227's effect on the federal decree, a list of schools with bilingual programs and the number of students involved in those programs.

The grand jury report stated that the jury never received the information.

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Monday, August 23, 1999

Ron Unz ponders N.Y. Bilingual fight

BY JOHN TIERNEY

New York Times

NEW YORK -- After leading the revolt against bilingual education in California, Palo Alto businessman Ron Unz would like to see one in New York City. Unz, a software millionaire who successfully promoted Proposition 227 last year, believes that New Yorkers are even more determined than Californians to see their children educated in English.

"The poll numbers in New York are stronger than just about any other place I've looked," said Unz, chairman of a group called English for the Children. "We're seriously exploring the possibility of putting a measure like Proposition 227 on the ballot in New York City." He is considering sponsoring a petition drive to urge a referendum on an amendment to the city charter.

Unz tested the local sentiment for a version of Proposition 227 by commissioning a poll asking whether all public school classes should be taught in English, with non-English speaking students placed in an intensive one-year English immersion program (instead of the native-language classes now offered in bilingual education programs). Of the 1,411 residents of New York state polled by Zogby International, 79 percent said yes. Among New York City residents, 75 percent said yes. The poll results may seem strange amid the popular impression that New York's many immigrants are clamoring for bilingual education. In fact, immigrants generally want English. In a national poll by Public Agenda, a non-partisan research organization, 75 percent of foreign-born parents said the schools' priority should be to teach English quickly, even if their children fall behind in other subjects.

Bilingual programs, begun as an experiment in the 1960s, proliferated thanks to federal money and orders from bureaucrats and judges. With bilingual teachers and theorists comfortably entrenched, the programs persisted even as parents and researchers concluded that they didn't work. Instead of students gradually learning English and switching to mainstream classes -- the goal of bilingual education -- they remained trapped year after year in native-language classes.

Latino parents at a school in Los Angeles got so frustrated in 1996 that they started a boycott, demanding that their children learn English. The protest led to Proposition 227, which leading politicians, most major newspapers and the educational establishment fiercely opposed.

Buoyed by the results, Unz's group is supporting changes elsewhere.

Unz was not surprised at the breakdown of his poll. Bilingual education was opposed by 73 percent of the respondents in Brooklyn, 75 percent in Queens, 84 percent in the Bronx, and 85 percent in Staten Island. The least opposition, 68 percent, was in Manhattan.

"A lot of liberal intellectuals in Manhattan probably support bilingual education for ideological reasons," Unz said. "If it were their own kids, they'd be fighting to get them into English classes."

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Monday, August 9, 1999

Prop. 227'S Influence is Seen in Other States

Orange County Register

Popular initiatives in California have a history of starting national movements. Proposition 13 in 1978 launched a national tax revolt. Proposition 187 in 1994 sparked a wave of legislation against illegal immigration.

By comparison, Proposition 227's effect is modest < but it's still palpable in Congress, statehouses

and school districts around the nation.

Backed by 61 percent of California voters in June 1998, Prop. 227 requires that almost all of California's 1.4 million limited-English students be taught in English, ending a 25-year experiment with bilingual education.

In May, Rep. Matt Salmon, R-Ariz., introduced the Parents Know Best Act, which would require permission of parents before their children are enrolled in a federally funded bilingual-education program. Current federal law allows parents to withdraw their children from bilingual programs but does not require consent before students are placed in those classes.

The most organized campaign is taking place in Arizona, where activists are gathering signatures to place an initiative with nearly identical wording to 227 on the November 2000 ballot.

"If California could do it, then I think Arizona can, too," said Maria Mendoza of Tucson, campaign chairwoman of English for the Children of Arizona and an opponent of bilingual education for 30 years.

The release of California test scores in July, which showed improvements among limited-English students, added momentum to the Arizona cause, Mendoza said.

"The California test scores mean a big boost for our campaign, because the argument of our opponents was that we didn't have any statistics," she said. "Now we do."

Gloria Matta Tuchman, the Santa Ana teacher who co-led the pro-227 campaign, said repercussions will grow if California's test scores continue to rise in coming years, as she expects.

"This is just the beginning," she said. "It's one state at a time."

But not all changes in bilingual programs are following California's lead.

The school board in Houston, the nation's fifth-largest school district, approved a new policy in July that encourages multilingual education, a response to the area's growing Hispanic population and demand from businesses for bilingual workers.

"Proposition 227 calls for English only. We called for proficiency in at least two languages," said Gabriel Vasquez, a Houston school board member who sponsored the new policy. "City leaders in Houston embraced diversity as a positive thing."

Still, the political clout of 227 has helped spur bilingual-education advocates to reassess their unwavering opposition to English immersion. The National Association of Bilingual Education installed new leadership in July that has officially acknowledged the merits of different methods of teaching English, given the scarcity of resources and teachers in some areas of the country.

"I don't want to say we're backing away from supporting bilingual programs," said NABE spokesman Jaime Zapata. "We're saying the responsible thing is to address the needs of children taking

into account the situation in a community.”

Tuchman is using her name recognition as a backer of the initiative to help her political career. She is running for the Republican nomination to oppose Rep. Loretta Sanchez, D Santa Ana, next year.

“It’s definitely not a detriment < 227 got about 58 percent of the vote in that district,” Tuchman said.

Ron Unz, who bankrolled most of the pro-227 campaign, is circulating petitions for a new initiative on the March 2000 California ballot, this one to reform campaign spending.

The tactics of anti-227 forces < who outspent Unz by about 20-to-1 < aroused his interest in the topic. Among other things, Unz’s Voters Rights 2000 initiative includes a ban on corporate donations to candidates, requires overnight Internet-based disclosure of contributions, and caps donations at \$5,000 for statewide races and \$3,000 for local races.

Like English for the Children, the campaign-finance initiative addresses a popular theme that politicians have been unable < or unwilling < to tackle. Also like 227, the initiative has been carefully written by Unz to withstand the type of court challenges that struck down recent campaign-reform initiatives.

Shirley Grindle, an Orange County campaign-finance reform activist, opposes the new proposition because, she said, the \$3,000 local contribution cap is too high. “But I don’t fault Mr. Unz for having an initiative that 99 percent of the voters won’t read and that probably will pass.”

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Wednesday, August 4, 1999

Caution Urged in Interpreting Calif. Scores

Education Week

WASHINGTON, August 4 -- After numerous scoring glitches and weeks of delay, California late last month released detailed results of student achievement tests. An especially intense spotlight had been trained on the scores of students whose native language is not English—largely because of Proposition 227, the ballot initiative passed last year that curtailed bilingual education in the state’s classrooms. Statewide, the test results show a glaring achievement gap between limited English-proficient students and those who speak English fluently. Far fewer LEP students performed at or above the national average on the standardized test. The results also show, on the whole, that LEP students’ scores are higher than they were last year. But the increases by LEP students are comparable to the gains made by all California students, state officials said. “I honestly think it’s hard to glean any real conclusions about Prop 227 from this first-year score,” state

schools Superintendent Delaine Eastin said. LEP students “are not moving up dramatically higher. It’s really too early to celebrate or throw stones.” (Education Week)

Wednesday, July 14, 1999

Scoring Glitch Clouds Impact of Prop. 227

Education Week

SACRAMENTO, July 14 -- It’s been two weeks since the results of California’s statewide achievement test were released. But the answer to a closely watched question -- what those scores say about the effects of Proposition 227, the ballot initiative that curtailed bilingual education in the state’s classrooms -- remains unclear. Because of a computer error, in which scores for students who are no longer considered limited-English-proficient were included with the scores of those who are still in that category, the data were returned to the test publisher, Harcourt Brace Educational Measurement. The company is expected to provide corrected files to the state this week. The mistake did not affect the overall results, which state schools Superintendent Delaine Eastin said “are moving in the right direction- upward bound.” But, she said, the error “may have resulted in overstating the achievement of our LEP students.” (Education Week)

Wednesday, July 7, 1999

Glitch Over Language Proficiency Mars Test Results in California

By ANDREA ADELSON

The New York Times

SANTA ANA, Calif. -- California students made modest gains in every subject and nearly every grade in a test of basic skills this spring, according to results reported last week. But what seemed like a big victory for opponents of bilingual education evaporated when a reporting error was found to have inflated the scores of non-English-speaking students.

The error, discovered the day before the scores were to be posted on the Internet, made it look as if students with limited English had made sharp gains in the first school year since the state’s voters banned bilingual education.

But last Wednesday, embarrassed officials from the state and the test’s publisher, Harcourt Educational Measurement, announced that they had mistakenly pooled scores for students not fluent in English with those for students whose English had been limited but now was fluent.

As a result, only statewide results, not those for individual districts or for students with limited English, have now been posted on the California Education Department’s Web site.

Education officials still expect the revised scores, to be made public on July 15, will show some

improvement by non-native speakers.

Ron Unz, the Silicon Valley entrepreneur who was the author of Proposition 227, which banned bilingual education, said, "Even a significant improvement statewide would be a powerful statement."

As a whole, California scores on the achievement tests were just below the national average. The biggest gains came in math and spelling by early elementary school pupils, the first beneficiaries of smaller class sizes in kindergarten through the third grade, a popular initiative that was begun three years ago.

"In K through 3 we're seeing results," said Delaine Eastin, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. But she added that achieving similar gains across all grade levels would require substantial new spending.

Besides the glitch over language proficiency, the test itself remains controversial, particularly over questions meant to reflect California's newly adopted academic standards, some of the most rigorous in the nation.

Last week the California Federation of Teachers asked for a one-year hiatus on testing until the new curriculum is taught statewide. Most districts are only now adding the revised instruction to their curriculum.

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Thursday, July 1, 1999

Computer glitch clouds any gauge of Prop. 227's effectiveness

Daniel M. Weintraub and Elizabeth Chey

Orange County Register

SACRAMENTO -- News of Proposition 227's success might have been greatly exaggerated. The 1998 initiative that sought to end bilingual education in public schools may yet turn out to be a boon to immigrant children. But the first objective signs of the initiative's early promise were unclear at best.

The state Department of Education announced Wednesday that the test's publisher mistakenly combined the scores of limited-English children with those of students who had become fluent. That means the scores for limited-English kids -- the targets of Prop. 227 -- were inflated when reported as a group.

The correct scores are expected to be released by July 15.

The error could hardly have occurred in a more explosive arena.

Prop. 227 rubbed a raw nerve in California politics as the third in a series of ballot measures in

the 1990s that dealt with ethnic issues. Pushed by millionaire computer software entrepreneur Ron Unz and Santa Ana schoolteacher Gloria Matta Tuchman, the initiative divided the Hispanic community and forced both major political parties to re-examine their relationships with the state's fastest-growing voter bloc.

It passed with 61 percent of the vote.

Since the measure's changes took hold last fall, its backers and opponents have pounced on every possible sign of its effect on schoolchildren. Anecdotal reports began to surface earlier this year from teachers and parents suggesting that students placed in English immersion classes mandated by the measure were faring well. Even some who had fought the initiative said they were surprised at the results.

Those stories seemed to be buttressed by facts as scores on the state's standardized test -- the Stanford 9 -- began to trickle in last month. Some schools said their English learners had doubled or tripled their scores in the year since Prop. 227 took effect.

In the Magnolia School District in Anaheim, scores for English language learners rose an average of 12 percentile points in grades two-six in reading, spelling, language and math. In Fullerton, second-grade language scores rose 11 points and eighth grade reading scores jumped 14 points.

Those results prompted Unz to call his creation "the most rapidly successful education reform in history."

Unz declined to retreat from that description even after hearing Wednesday about the error in the scores. He pointed out that only about 5 percent to 10 percent of English learners are redesignated by the schools as fluent each year. It was those redesignated students whose scores were mistakenly lumped in with the limited-English kids.

"So the mistake represents a small fraction of the kids under Prop. 227," he said.

Superintendent of Public Instruction Delaine Eastin said Wednesday that she thought the error probably boosted group scores for limited-English kids by about 5 percentile points. But Eastin aide Gerry Shelton said later that the figure his boss used was his own "bootstrap analysis" without much real information to back it up.

No one will know for sure until the accurate reports are released. And even those scores are unlikely to settle this debate, as examples can be found to support either side.

In Santa Ana, for instance, students whose parents asked for waivers to keep them in bilingual programs did as well as those who were immersed in English.

At Pio Pico Elementary School, where about 95 percent of the students are limited English and more than 50 percent of those students stayed in bilingual education, scores in second-grade reading climbed from the 16th percentile to the 23rd.

At Jackson Elementary, where 90 percent of students are limited English but all went to English immersion, scores inched up from the 20th percentile to the 21st in second grade reading.

“Schools with lots of waivers made the same significant jumps that schools without waivers did,” said Linda Del Guidice, director of research and evaluation. “Much of that is attributed to test preparation and aligning our curriculum with the state content standards. We had little first- and second-graders practice how to fill the bubbles on the test.”

Silvina Rubinstein, executive director of the California Association for Bilingual Education, said even the “cleaned-up scores” won’t be a valid measure of Prop. 227’s effectiveness because the Stanford 9 was not designed to assess the performance of English learners.

It’s also unwise, she said, to draw conclusions based on one year of results without much information about the kinds of programs the children have been in.

Peter Roos, co-director of a San Francisco-based group that supports bilingual education, said he won’t be surprised if the accurate results show improvement, but he said it will be years before Prop. 227 can be judged.

“The real test should be whether the kids are making it into the mainstream and are able to compete and able to be distributed across the board in the same way that native English-speaking kids are,” he said. “Ultimately that’s going to have to be the measure of whether this is succeeding.”

Register staff writer John Gittelsohn contributed to this report.

Copyright Orange County Register

Thursday, July 1, 1999

Computer glitch clouds any gauge of Prop. 227’S effectiveness

Daniel M. Weintraub and Elizabeth Chey

Orange County Register

Los Angeles Times

The private company that is paid \$34 million to administer statewide achievement tests admitted Tuesday that it had misclassified about 300,000 students as not being fluent in English, a blunder that may have skewed school district reports across California for the past month.

The effect of that error could be seen in scores released Tuesday by the Los Angeles Unified School District.

The district initially reported stunning, double-digit gains in the Stanford 9 scores achieved by students who were not yet fluent in English.

Later, because the overall scores had inched up only slightly, officials realized the gains couldn’t be real.

The misclassification doesn't affect individual student scores that have already been sent home to parents or the overall trends in district scores.

Reached Tuesday night, officials for Harcourt Educational Measurement attributed the problem to programming errors. Ed Slawski, a senior research scientist for Harcourt, said the problem was discovered Monday.

But a state Department of Education spokesman said the company did not notify the state or school districts. Instead, officials began to suspect a problem and contacted the company.

Despite the error, test scores for the statewide program involving 4.2 million children in grades two through 11 were still to be released today.

State officials said they were bound by state law to post the data on the Internet although the scores for limited-English-speaking students may have been inflated. Scores for English-proficient students could be affected as well.

Doug Stone, a spokesman for the Education Department, said some of the numbers will be correct. "At this point, we don't believe that the error has affected the accuracy of the overall statewide numbers," Stone said.

Stone said Harcourt had told the state that it would take until July 15 to rectify the situation.

"This may have been an honest mistake, but it was a real mistake and we do expect Harcourt to fix it and fix it expeditiously," Stone said.

Over the past two weeks, school districts from Orange County to Sacramento had begun reporting scores for their students in reading, math, writing and spelling. The numbers seemed to show dramatic gains for the one in five California students who are not fluent in English.

The Oceanside Unified School District reported that test scores for students still learning English had doubled or even tripled.

Such scores had been widely seen as vindication by backers of Proposition 227, the anti-bilingual education measure approved by voters a year ago. The approval of that law had banned most lessons not taught in English, and educators across the state had predicted that it would lead to an educational disaster.

Proponents of the proposition had exulted as the scores trickled out.

Ron Unz, author of the proposition, had boasted that it was "the most rapidly successful education reform program in history."

When informed of the error Tuesday night, Unz said he remained confident that the corrected numbers would bear out such predictions.

"All the anecdotal evidence preceding the release of these test scores had certainly made a rise seem possible," Unz said. "I would expect that, once the correct numbers are found, we would see

a very strong rise in Oceanside. I would expect to see a rise in L.A. Unified and the other districts, though perhaps not as dramatic.”

Harcourt officials would not concede Tuesday night that scores for individual school districts were affected by the error.

“I can’t say with any certainty,” Slawski said. “It’s quite possible the district results are correct.” However, problems were immediately apparent in L.A. Unified’s scores.

In some grades, limited-English-proficient students were reported to have made gains of eight or nine percentile points, although there were no overall gains for those grades. Since more than half of those taking the exam were limited-English proficient, that would mean that the scores of native English-speaking students had declined by an even more unlikely amount.

Eva Baker, a nationally known testing expert at UCLA, said the dramatic gains reported for non-fluent students across the state had left researchers puzzled.

“We’ve been mystified by how these numbers could have been true,” she said. “We were hoping to find an explanation that would make some sense.”

She said parents, teachers and politicians “shouldn’t be disappointed by the reality of the test scores” if they show only modest gains. “This reinforces the idea that real gains in learning are achieved over the long term by teaching the important content the test measures.”

Supt. Ruben Zacarias said L.A. Unified’s overall gains were encouraging but that he is not satisfied.

“I have said no child should get past the third grade without reading at grade level,” Zacarias said. “We’re not there, but we’re headed that way.”

The district’s scores improved slightly in reading but remained in the bottom third nationally in every grade level. Math scores were higher, with five grade levels at or above the 35th percentile. State education officials used the snafu to reiterate their view that the state ought to have a single contract with the test publisher. As it stands now, each of the state’s 1,000 school districts contracts directly with the company.

The Times will publish selected school-by-school data when it becomes available.

Times education writer Louis Sahagun contributed to this story.

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Wednesday, June 30, 1999

Error May Have Skewed Statewide Test Results

By RICHARD LEE COLVIN, Times Staff Writer

Los Angeles Times

The private company that is paid \$34 million to administer statewide achievement tests admitted Tuesday that it had misclassified about 300,000 students as not being fluent in English, a blunder that may have skewed school district reports across California for the past month.

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Harcourt officials would not concede Tuesday night that scores for individual school districts were affected by the error.

“I can’t say with any certainty,” Slawski said. “It’s quite possible the district results are correct.” However, problems were immediately apparent in L.A. Unified’s scores.

In some grades, limited-English-proficient students were reported to have made gains of eight or nine percentile points, although there were no overall gains for those grades. Since more than half of those taking the exam were limited-English proficient, that would mean that the scores of native English-speaking students had declined by an even more unlikely amount.

Eva Baker, a nationally known testing expert at UCLA, said the dramatic gain reported for non-fluent students across the state had left researchers puzzled.

“We’ve been mystified by how these numbers could have been true,” she said. “We were hoping to find an explanation that would make some sense.”

She said parents, teachers and politicians “shouldn’t be disappointed by the reality of the test scores” if they show only modest gains. “This reinforces the idea that real gains in learning are achieved over the long term by teaching the important content the test measures.”

Supt. Ruben Zacarias said L.A. Unified’s overall gains were encouraging but that he is not satisfied.

“I have said no child should get past the third grade without reading at grade level,” Zacarias said. “We’re not there, but we’re headed that way.”

The district’s scores improved slightly in reading but remained in the bottom third nationally in every grade level. Math scores were higher, with five grade levels at or above the 35th percentile. State education officials used the snafu to reiterate their view that the state ought to have a single

contract with the test publisher. As it stands now, each of the state's 1,000 school districts contracts directly with the company.

The Times will publish selected school-by-school data when it becomes available.

Times education writer Louis Sahagun contributed to this story.

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Saturday, June 26, 1999

Prop. 227 backers hail test gains

John Gittelsohn

Orange County Register

FULLERTON - Betty Othmer wasn't surprised that her Spanish-speaking students' test scores improved this year, because they've been taught almost exclusively in English.

"If I'd been taught in one language and tested in another, it doesn't take a rocket scientist to see scores aren't going to be very good," said Othmer, a second-grade teacher at Richman Elementary School.

Reading scores among second-graders at Richman climbed to the 21st percentile from the 15th percentile last year.

Critics of bilingual education cite such gains as evidence that English-only instruction is a success.

"I think you can make a case that Proposition 227 is the most rapidly successful education reform in history," said Ron Unz, co-author of the state ballot measure that ended most bilingual instruction.

Reports of higher scores among students with limited proficiency in English are trickling in from around California before Wednesday's publication date for all state scores.

Limited-English students in Oceanside Unified in San Diego doubled and quadrupled their reading scores, Unz said. In second grade, they jumped from the 12th percentile to the 24th percentile. In fifth grade, they went from the 6th percentile to the 20th percentile. The 50th percentile is average.

Also bolstering Unz's case are reports from schools that kept bilingual programs. Second-grade reading scores fell at Rio Vista and Topaz elementary schools in Placentia Yorba Linda Unified, where hundreds of parents signed waivers to keep their kids in bilingual classes.

But Unz also plays with statistics to build his case, saying, for example, that a gain from the 10th percentile to the 25th percentile represents a 150 percent increase. In fact, the actual improvement in scores is less dramatic.

To score at the 10th percentile in second-grade reading, for example, students must answer 43 of 118 questions correctly. To score at the 25th percentile, they need 57 right.

In other words, a 33 percent increase in the number of correct answers yields a 150 percent gain in percentile points.

Most educators take a more cautious approach to test gains. Scores often rise in the second year of a test as students and teachers become more familiar with the format and content. Better teacher training, new textbooks and class-size reduction could also boost scores.

“Because the scores for limited-English and fluent-English students are all up, I’d think there are other things going on as well,” said Phil Morse, administrator for research in Orange Unified School District.

Measures other than test scores raise questions about English immersion. The rate of students being reclassified from limited English to fluent English declined this year in Westminster, Magnolia and Orange Unified, which pioneered English-only instruction.

Othmer said banning Spanish instruction hurts newcomers, who need help understanding the most basic vocabulary. But she also conceded that her second-graders who had spent the year studying in English were ready to take the kind of tests they’ll face later in school - and life.

“They had a much higher confidence level,” she said. “They hung in there. You could see the gray matter churning.”

Copyright Orange County Register

Friday, June 25, 1999

LAUSD to continue bilingual classes

Beth Barrett

Los Angeles Daily News

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Conclusion

This collection of newspaper articles with reference to the proposition 227 in the State of California covered from Wednesday, January 13, 1999 to Saturday, June 26, 1999

In the next paper, the sole purpose of publishing the next paper in the Annual Report next year will make an attempt to introduce more number of newspaper articles.